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RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 1426  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2299  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHMFISS/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KATHMANDU 000023

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [NP](#)

SUBJECT: POLICE ACROSS WESTERN NEPAL UNDER ORDERS NOT TO  
CONFRONT MAOISTS

Classified By: Ambassador James F. Moriarty. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

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11. (C) Police officials from across Western Nepal told Emboff during a driving tour from December 14-25 that the Nepal Police were nervous and afraid of the Maoists. Officials said they were under orders not to confront the Maoists under any circumstances. The bombed-out shells of police buildings were evident in all 19 districts visited. In most parts of western Nepal, the Maoists had not allowed the police to re-establish any posts. In cases where police posts had been re-established, the Maoists had subsequently forced most of them to re-close. Police officials complained that the government mandate to re-establish police posts was politically motivated and not backed by funds, logistical support, or the will to make the program work. Many believed that the GON and the political leadership would not support them if they did begin to enforce law and order across the country. Morale in the Nepal Police was at "an all-time low." Police across the country did not trust the Maoists.

Fear of the Maoists Prevails

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12. (C) Police officials from 14 districts in the western (around Pokhara), mid-western (around Birendranagar), and far-western (around Dipayal) development regions told Emboff during a driving tour from December 14-25 that the police were afraid of the Maoists in many districts. Officials were nervous that the Maoists would take action against them or their families if they disagreed with them on any issue. When Emboff was stuck in Salyan District because of a transportation strike called by the Maoists, the District Superintendent of Police (SP) sought permission from the Maoists for Emboff to depart. After an extended conversation, the SP told Emboff that he should wait in the district headquarters until the strike was over because, "if the Maoists try and do anything to you, there is nothing the police can do." The Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) in the Far-Western Region told Emboff that during a

recent trip to the airport, the Maoists had stopped his armed motorcade and demanded money from them. The DIGP said that his armed guards had been powerless to do anything to stop the Maoists. The motorcade paid the money and was allowed to proceed. Contacts in all districts provided similar reports.

#### Police Helpless to Enforce Law and Order

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13. (C) Police officials told Emboff that the Nepal Police were helpless to do anything to counter criminal activities by the Maoists. Police officials said that they had orders from the Home Ministry to avoid confronting the Maoists "at any cost." Police officials recounted many stories in which the Maoists committed criminal acts but police were unable to do anything due to this mandate from above. For instance, in Rolpa, the Maoists had been confiscating the passport of anyone who planned to travel internationally for work and charging them 30,000 Nepali Rupees (approx. USD 415) to get the passport back. Once the individual returned from abroad, they were required to pay an additional 100,000 Nepali Rupees (approx. USD 1,388) to the Maoists in exchange for the safety of their families. In Dang district, Emboff asked the SP what he would do if the Maoists came into the city with guns and started violence. The SP responded that such a situation would be a problem, but that there would be nothing he could do.

#### Shells of Former Police Posts Everywhere

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14. (SBU) Emboff passed through 19 districts in the west during the driving tour and saw the burned-out shells of

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former Nepal police posts in every district. These ruined posts were both in the countryside and in major cities. In the district headquarters, the police had mostly rebuilt and re-established posts, although in some cases there were still ruined posts remaining next to newly built ones. In Tansen (Palpa District), the burned-out remains of the main district headquarters is right next to the new police post, as well as the burned hulks of four police vehicles destroyed by the Maoists during a large attack on the city before the cease-fire. Many of the ruins of former posts were covered by Maoist propaganda, including anti-American graffiti in some cases.

#### Re-Establishing Police Posts a Daunting Task

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15. (C) Police in some areas had re-established rural police posts. In the lowland district of Rupandehi, all 26 rural police posts had been re-established, although the police there could not do anything but deal with traffic accidents. In more remote areas like Rolpa, Pyuthan, Salyan, and Achham Districts, Maoists had not yet allowed the police to re-establish rural posts. During Emboff's visit, the Maoists forced many of the posts that had been re-established in the countryside to close and the police officers to return to the district headquarters. The Maoists in these areas said they would not allow the posts to come back until the promulgation of the interim constitution and the formation of an interim government with Maoist participation. On December 24, at a police post on the border between Doti District and Achham District (far-western Nepal), the Inspector-in-charge showed Emboff a letter he had received from the Maoists that morning, calling for the immediate closure of the post and the return of the officers to the district headquarters. When Emboff asked what the Inspector planned to do, he replied that they would "return to the headquarters immediately" because there was "no other choice."

#### No Resources for New Posts

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¶6. (SBU) Police officials across the west complained about the lack of resources given to the police to re-establish their posts. The DIGP for the Far-Western Region said that the government had given a political order to re-establish posts immediately, but that the Home Ministry and the central leadership of the police were not providing the money, furniture, or clothing necessary to accomplish the task. He complained that the re-establishment of posts thus far had been a "purely political exercise," and that until resources and orders came down from above, the new posts were "completely useless."

¶7. (SBU) Many of the re-established posts Emboff encountered were badly constructed and supported. Some rural posts were nothing more than a framework of bamboo covered with plastic tarp to keep out the wind. Others were small shacks with tin roofs, or the bombed-out remains of the old post with the holes covered over with straw or plastic. Most of the posts were not well-stocked, and Emboff heard three accounts of Maoists visiting re-established posts and seizing all the food and warm clothing by force.

#### Political Support for the Police Lacking

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¶8. (C) Police sources across the country worried that the political parties in the governing Seven-Party Alliance did not fully support them in their work. The Sub-Inspector-in-charge in Arghakhachi District told Emboff that even with orders to confront the Maoists, the police would be reluctant to do so; the police feared the political parties would not stand behind them if the Maoists blamed them for "ruining the peace process." Many police, he stated, were disillusioned after the People's Movement

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because they had carried out the orders of the then-government and were punished for doing so after the government changed. This, he feared, could happen again if the Maoists gained control of the government, and it was not a risk some of the police officers were willing to take. This sentiment was shared by many police officials across the country.

#### Public Support High

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¶9. (C) Police officials reported that public support of the police, especially in rural areas, was high. In every district, the police told stories of how people in rural communities had asked them to come back and re-establish posts, only to have the Maoists punish them afterward for making such requests. Leaders of the three main political parties (Nepali Congress, Nepali Congress-Democratic, and the Communist Party of Nepal-United Marxist Leninist) told Emboff that the police were the only security force that still held the trust of the people. In order to hold free and fair elections, the police needed to be allowed to do their jobs.

#### Morale at an "All-time Low"

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¶10. (C) The DIGP in the far-west stated that the morale of the Nepal Police was at an "all-time low" due to the factors mentioned above. This message came across loud and clear from every police official Emboff spoke to in western Nepal. Police were concerned that they were not being allowed to do their jobs and worried that the GON might attempt to merge the Maoist militia (who had been their enemy for the past ten years) with the Nepal Police in the near future. One police official said that they would "not stand for militia to be integrated into the police." When asked what he meant by that, the official declined to give a direct answer, but repeated that "such action would not be good."

Comment

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¶11. (C) The Nepal Police have been ordered to avoid confrontation by the GON since the April 27 cease-fire with the Maoists. Police officials are growing frustrated with their inability to take action against criminal activities simply because the perpetrators are Maoists. It is important that we continue to press the GON to restore law and order across the countryside and take action against criminals regardless of their political affiliation. We need to find ways to support the Nepal Police as they expand into the countryside, providing training and resources as necessary. We also need to pressure the political parties to publicly show their support for the Nepal Police and make it clear that the parties will stand behind them when they start doing their jobs.

MORIARTY